

Application No. 10/735,091
Amendment Dated August 8, 2006
Response to Office Action of February 9, 2006

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Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the Application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Cancelled)
2. (Cancelled)
3. (Cancelled)
4. (Cancelled)
5. (Cancelled)
6. (Cancelled)
7. (Cancelled)
8. (Cancelled)
9. (Cancelled)
10. (Cancelled)
11. (Cancelled)
12. (Cancelled)
13. (Cancelled)
14. (Cancelled)
15. (Cancelled)
16. (Cancelled)
17. (Cancelled)
18. (Cancelled)

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19. (Currently Amended) The RUV according to Claim 17, A recreational utility vehicle (RUV) suitable for on-road and off-road multi-terrain use, said RUV comprising:

a longitudinally elongated frame;
front and rear suspensions coupled to and spaced longitudinally along said frame;
a longitudinally elongated multi-place saddle seat assembly on said frame, said multi-place saddle seat assembly accommodating at least two riders in tandem, namely an operator driver and a passenger, said multi-place saddle seat assembly having first and second sections, wherein said first section seats the driver, and said second section is aft of said first section and seats the passenger;

said frame being sufficiently longitudinally elongated to accommodate said multi-place saddle seat assembly and the at least two riders in tandem;

front and rear pairs of laterally spaced wheels coupled to said front and rear suspensions, respectively, said front and rear pairs of wheels being spaced apart by a wheelbase, said wheelbase being sufficiently longitudinally elongated to accommodate said frame and said multi-place saddle seat assembly and the at least two riders in tandem;

said front and rear suspensions being sufficiently sized and sprung to accommodate said wheelbase and said frame and said multi-place saddle seat assembly and the at least two riders in tandem; and

a pair of elongated multi-place multi-planar foot board assemblies on said frame on laterally opposite sides of said multi-place saddle seat assembly, said multi-place multi-planar foot board assemblies having first and second pairs of foot rests at different levels, wherein said first pair of foot rests positions the feet of the driver, and said second pair of foot rests is aft of and higher than said first pair of foot rests and positions the feet of the passenger,

wherein each of said second pair of foot rests comprises a pocket, each of said pockets locating the respective toes of a respective one of the passenger's feet.

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Cancelled)

23. (Cancelled)

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24. (Cancelled)

25. (Cancelled)

26. (New) A recreational utility vehicle (RUV) capable of accommodating multiple passengers, the RUV comprising:

right and left front wheels and right and left rear wheels, wherein the front wheels are spaced apart from the rear wheels by a wheelbase, and wherein each of the wheels is associated with a respective low-pressure tire having a respective internal pressure of substantially 10 psi or less;

right and left front fenders respectively extending behind respective rear edges of the right and left front tires, respectively, and right and left rear fenders respectively extending in front of respective front edges of the right and left rear tires, respectively;

a saddle seat having a first portion, a second portion and a transitional portion extending in a manner that is at least partially non-horizontal, the transitional portion being positioned between the first and second portions, the second portion being behind the first portion;

a longitudinally elongated frame to which the wheels, fenders and seat are coupled at least indirectly, the longitudinally elongated frame being sufficiently elongated to accommodate the saddle seat;

front and rear suspensions coupled to and spaced longitudinally along the frame, said front and rear suspensions being sufficiently sized and sprung to accommodate the wheelbase and the frame and the saddle seat;

a handlebar and a rack supported at least indirectly by the longitudinally elongated frame, wherein at least a part of the rack is positioned behind the saddle seat;

a pair of grip handles on laterally opposite sides of the saddle seat, wherein the grip handles are in addition to the handlebar and the rack, and wherein the grip handles are positioned forward of the part of the rack and aft of the first portion of the saddle seat; and

right and left foot rest surfaces that are respectively positioned between the right front and rear fenders and the left front and rear fenders, respectively, and that do not extend rearward of the front edges of the right and left rear tires, respectively,

wherein each of the right and left foot rest surfaces has a respective length that is substantially equal to or greater than a diameter of at least one of the tires.

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27. (New) The RUV of claim 26, wherein each of the right and left foot rest surfaces includes respective first and second protrusions that each extend, widthwise, at least mostly across the respective foot rest surface, the first and second protrusions of each respective foot rest surface being positioned in succession along a respective length of the respective foot rest surface, whereby the first and second protrusions of each respective foot rest surface are configured to facilitate positioning first and second feet in succession along the respective length of the respective foot rest surface.

28. (New) The RUV of claim 27, wherein the rack also extends forward along right and left sides of the saddle seat, wherein the rack includes additional parts that are positioned above the right and left rear wheels, and wherein at least some of the second portion of the saddle seat is positioned between the right and left rear wheels, and

wherein the first portion of the saddle seat is positioned substantially at a first level and the second portion is positioned substantially at a second level different from the first level.

29. (New) The RUV of claim 28, wherein the transitional portion extends upwardly and rearwardly from the first portion toward the second portion, wherein the transitional portion includes an elevated portion that is higher than at least substantially all of the first and second portions, and

wherein the wheelbase is at least 45 inches.

30. (New) The RUV of claim 26, further comprising an engine and an automatic transmission both supported at least indirectly by the frame,

wherein each of the right and left foot rest surfaces includes a respective first foot rest area and a respective second foot rest area that is positioned rearward of the respective first foot rest area, and

wherein at least a first section of the first foot rest area of one of the foot rest surfaces extends along a first plane that is different from a second plane along which extends at least a second section of the second foot rest area of the one foot rest surface.

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31. (New) The RUV of claim 30, wherein the rack also extends forward along right and left sides of the saddle seat, wherein the rack includes additional parts that are positioned above the right and left rear wheels, and wherein at least some of the second portion of the saddle seat is positioned between the right and left rear wheels, and

wherein the first portion of the saddle seat is positioned substantially at a first level and the second portion is positioned substantially at a second level different from the first level.

32. (New) The RUV of claim 31, further comprising an exterior housing structure supported by the frame, the exterior housing structure including both an upper portion and the right and left fenders that respectively extend partly around the right and left rear tires, respectively,

wherein the right and left foot rest surfaces respectively extend up to the right and left fenders, and wherein the upper portion extends at least partly around the second portion of the saddle seat and under the rack.

33. (New) The RUV of claim 32, wherein each of the right and left foot rest surfaces includes respective first and second protrusions that each extend, widthwise, at least mostly across the respective foot rest surface, the first and second protrusions of each respective foot rest surface being positioned in succession along a respective length of the respective foot rest surface within the respective first and second foot rest areas of the respective foot rest surface, whereby the first and second protrusions of each respective foot rest surface are configured to facilitate positioning first and second feet in succession along the respective length of the respective foot rest surface.

34. (New) The RUV of claim 33, wherein the grip handles are supported by the rack, and wherein the respective lengths of the right and left foot rest surfaces all exceed the diameter.

35. (New) The RUV of claim 34, wherein at least one of the protrusions includes a raised rib configured to extend under and locate a respective foot.

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36. (New) The RUV of claim 35, wherein the transitional portion extends upwardly and rearwardly from the first portion toward the second portion, wherein the transitional portion includes an elevated portion that is higher than substantially all of the first and second portions, wherein the wheelbase is at least 45 inches, and wherein the automatic transmission is a constant velocity transmission in combination with a gear-reducing transmission.

37. (New) A recreational utility vehicle (RUV) capable of accommodating multiple passengers, the RUV comprising:

right and left front wheels and right and left rear wheels, wherein the front wheels are spaced apart from the rear wheels by a wheelbase, and wherein each of the wheels is associated with a respective low-pressure tire;

right and left front fenders respectively extending behind respective rear edges of the right and left front tires, respectively, and right and left rear fenders respectively extending in front of respective front edges of the right and left rear tires, respectively;

a saddle seat having a first portion, a second portion and a transitional portion extending in a manner that is at least partially non-horizontal, the transitional portion being positioned between the first and second portions, the second portion being behind the first portion;

a longitudinally elongated frame to which the wheels, fenders and seat are coupled at least indirectly, the longitudinally elongated frame being sufficiently elongated to accommodate the saddle seat;

an engine and an automatic transmission both supported at least indirectly by the frame, front and rear suspensions coupled to and spaced longitudinally along the frame, said front and rear suspensions being sufficiently sized and sprung to accommodate the wheelbase and the frame and the saddle seat;

a handlebar and a rack supported at least indirectly by the longitudinally elongated frame, wherein at least a part of the rack is positioned behind the saddle seat;

a pair of grip handles on laterally opposite sides of the saddle seat, wherein the grip handles are in addition to the handlebar and the rack, and wherein the grip handles are positioned forward of the part of the rack and aft of the first portion of the saddle seat; and

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right and left foot rest surfaces that are respectively positioned between the right front and rear fenders and the left front and rear fenders, respectively, and that do not extend rearward of the front edges of the right and left rear tires, respectively,

wherein each of the right and left foot rest surfaces has a respective length that is substantially equal to or greater than a diameter of at least one of the tires,

wherein each of the right and left foot rest surfaces includes a respective first foot rest area and a respective second foot rest area that is positioned rearward of the respective first foot rest area,

wherein at least a first section of the first foot rest area of one of the foot rest surfaces extends along a first plane that is different from a second plane along which extends at least a second section of the second foot rest area of the one foot rest surface, and

wherein each of the right and left foot rest surfaces includes respective first and second protrusions that each extend, widthwise, at least mostly across the respective foot rest surface, the first and second protrusions of each respective foot rest surface being positioned in succession along a respective length of the respective foot rest surface within the respective first and second foot rest areas of the respective foot rest surface, whereby the first and second protrusions of each respective foot rest surface are configured to facilitate positioning first and second feet in succession along the respective length of the respective foot rest surface.

38. (New) The RUV of claim 37, wherein the first portion is positioned substantially at a first level and the second portion is positioned substantially at a second level different from the first level, and

further comprising an exterior housing structure supported by the frame, the exterior housing structure including both an upper portion and the right and left fenders that respectively extend partly around the right and left rear wheels, respectively,

wherein the right and left foot rest surfaces respectively extend up to the right and left fenders, and wherein the upper portion extends at least partly around the second portion of the saddle seat and under the rack.

39. (New) The RUV of claim 38, wherein the rack also extends forward along right and left sides of the saddle seat, wherein the rack includes additional parts that are positioned above the

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right and left rear wheels, and wherein at least some of the second portion of the saddle seat is positioned between the right and left rear wheels.

40. (New) The RUV of claim 39, wherein the transitional portion extends upwardly and rearwardly from the first portion toward the second portion, and wherein the transitional portion includes an elevated portion that is higher than substantially all of the first and second portions.

41. (New) The RUV of claim 40, wherein the grip handles are supported by the rack, wherein the wheelbase is at least 45 inches, and wherein the respective lengths of the right and left foot rest surfaces all exceed the diameter.

42. (New) The RUV of claim 41, wherein at least one of the protrusions includes a raised rib configured to extend under and locate a respective foot, wherein each of the low-pressure tires has a respective internal pressure of substantially 10 psi or less, and wherein the automatic transmission is a constant velocity transmission in combination with a gear-reducing transmission.

43. (New) A recreational utility vehicle (RUV) capable of accommodating multiple passengers, the RUV comprising:

right and left front wheels and right and left rear wheels, wherein the front wheels are spaced apart from the rear wheels by a wheelbase, and wherein each of the wheels is associated with a respective low-pressure tire;

right and left front fenders respectively extending behind respective rear edges of the right and left front tires, respectively, and right and left rear fenders respectively extending in front of respective front edges of the right and left rear tires, respectively;

a saddle seat having a first portion and a second portion behind the first portion, wherein the first portion is positioned substantially at a first level and the second portion is positioned substantially at a second level different from the first level;

a longitudinally elongated frame to which the wheels, fenders and seat are coupled at least indirectly, the longitudinally elongated frame being sufficiently elongated to accommodate the saddle seat;

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front and rear suspensions coupled to and spaced longitudinally along the frame, said front and rear suspensions being sufficiently sized and sprung to accommodate the wheelbase and the frame and the saddle seat;

a handlebar and a rack supported at least indirectly by the longitudinally elongated frame, wherein at least a part of the rack is positioned behind the saddle seat;

a pair of grip handles on laterally opposite sides of the saddle seat, wherein the grip handles are in addition to the handlebar and the rack, and wherein the grip handles are positioned forward of the part of the rack and aft of the first portion of the saddle seat;

right and left foot rest surfaces that are respectively positioned between the right front and rear fenders and the left front and rear fenders, respectively, and that do not extend rearward of the front edges of the right and left rear tires, respectively, wherein each of the right and left foot rest surfaces has a respective length that is substantially equal to or greater than a diameter of at least one of the tires; and

an exterior housing structure supported by the frame, the exterior housing structure including both an upper portion and the right and left fenders that respectively extend partly around the right and left rear tires, respectively,

wherein the right and left foot rest surfaces respectively extend up to the right and left fenders, and wherein the upper portion extends at least partly around the second portion of the saddle seat and under the rack.

44. (New) The RUV of claim 43, further comprising an engine and an automatic transmission both supported at least indirectly by the frame,

wherein each of the right and left foot rest surfaces includes a respective first foot rest area and a respective second foot rest area that is positioned rearward of the respective first foot rest area, and

wherein at least a first section of the first foot rest area of one of the foot rest surfaces extends along a first plane that is different from a second plane along which extends at least a second section of the second foot rest area of the one foot rest surface.

45. (New) The RUV of claim 44, wherein each of the right and left foot rest surfaces includes respective first and second protrusions that each extend, widthwise, at least mostly

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across the respective foot rest surface, the first and second protrusions of each respective foot rest surface being positioned in succession along a respective length of the respective foot rest surface within the respective first and second foot rest areas of the respective foot rest surface, whereby the first and second protrusions of each respective foot rest surface are configured to facilitate positioning first and second feet in succession along the respective length of the respective foot rest surface.

46. (New) The RUV of claim 45, wherein the rack also extends forward along right and left sides of the saddle seat, wherein the rack includes additional parts that are positioned above the right and left rear wheels, wherein at least some of the second portion of the saddle seat is positioned between the right and left rear wheels, and wherein the saddle seat additionally includes a transitional portion extending in a manner that is at least partially non-horizontal, the transitional portion being positioned between the first and second portions.

47. (New) The RUV of claim 46, wherein the transitional portion extends upwardly and rearwardly from the first portion toward the second portion, and wherein the transitional portion includes an elevated portion that is higher than at least substantially all of the first and second portions.

48. (New) The RUV of claim 47, wherein at least one of the protrusions includes a raised rib configured to extend under and locate a respective foot, and wherein each of the low-pressure tires has a respective internal pressure of substantially 10 psi or less.

49. (New) The RUV of claim 48, wherein the grip handles are supported by the rack, wherein the wheelbase is at least 45 inches, wherein the respective lengths of the right and left foot rest surfaces all exceed the diameter, and wherein the automatic transmission is a constant velocity transmission in combination with a gear-reducing transmission.